

At this time they were preparing a performance of Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*. It was very well cast and they could all display the full range of their talents within the restricted compass of this tragedy. Serlo was just right as the sinister Marinelli. Odoardo, Emilia's father, was well played, Madame Melina played the mother with considerable insight, and Elmire carried off the role of Emilia to her great advantage. Laertes played Emilia's short-lived fiancé Appiani with great style, and Wilhelm had spent several months studying the part of the Prince. He often reflected on a certain matter and discussed it with Serlo and Aurelie, namely: What is the difference between noble and aristocratic behavior, and to what extent the one is, or is not, part of the other.

Serlo, who played Marinelli straight, as courtier, without any caricature, had various good things to say on this subject. "Aristocratic behavior is difficult to imitate," he said, "because it is fundamentally negative and presupposes a long period of continuous experience. Such behavior should not present a display of dignity, for that would be liable to appear as formality and pride; it should rather avoid all that is undignified or vulgar. One should never forget oneself, always consider oneself as well as others, never allow oneself any lapses, do neither too much nor too little for others, appear not to be affected or disturbed by anything, never be hurried, always be in control of oneself and externally maintain an equilibrium however tormented one may be inside. A noble man can relax for a moment, a nobleman never. The nobleman is like a well-dressed man: he will never lean up against anything and everyone will avoid brushing against him. He is marked off from others, but cannot stand alone. For as in every form of art what is most difficult has to be achieved effortlessly: the nobleman, despite his distinct status, has to appear in combination with others, never stiff, always pliant—always as the first but never putting himself forward. To appear aristocratic one really has to be an aristocrat. And perhaps that is why, on the average, women can more often give themselves this appearance than men, and why amongst men it is courtiers and soldiers who achieve it most readily."

After this Wilhelm despaired of ever playing the Prince, but Serlo gave him encouragement, making some subtle observations about details and giving him a costume that would turn him into a really fine prince, at least in the eyes of the public.

Serlo promised to comment on Wilhelm's presentation of the part when the performance of the play was over. But an unpleasant argument between him and Aurelie prevented any critical assessment. Aurelie had played the part of the Countess Orsina, the Prince's cast-off mistress, in a way such as one is hardly